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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

December 2, 2005

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives

The Honorable Barney Frank
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services
House of Representatives

Subject: Office of Special Counsel (OSC) Case Assignment Procedures
and Data Reliability Issues

Concerning your letter to the Comptroller General requesting a GAO study of how the OSC assigns incoming cases to specific units and individuals and the extent to which data in OSC systems are reliable, we met with your staff on August 10, 2005, to gain a further understanding of your needs.

Due to the complexity of the issue, we need to proceed with a separate design phase. The purpose of this letter is to set forth the study objectives and provide you with a completion date for the design phase. The overall objectives of our work will be to review (1) OSC's policies and procedures for assigning incoming cases; (2) whether these policies and procedures followed consistently for all cases; (3) the extent to which data in the OSC 2000 database system are reliable; and (4) whether the types of discrepancies we identified during our earlier work have been corrected.

The design phase will be completed by March 15, 2006. We will remain in contact with your staff, and at the end of the design phase, we will provide you with a projected completion date for the total study. Should you have any questions, please contact me on (202) 512-9490 or stalcupg@gao.gov or, Kimberly Gianopoulos, Assistant Director, on (202) 512-8612 or gianopoulosk@gao.gov.

George H. Stalcup
Director, Strategic Issues

cc: Garg Sampak, Counsel
Joe Racalto, Legislative Assistant